Guidance For A MUSLIM WIFE

Maulvi Majaz Azami (Ra)

Guidance

for

Muslim

Wife

By

Maulana Majaz Azami (R.A)

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SAYINGS OF RASULULLAH (SALLALLAHU ALAIHI WASALLAM)

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam was extremely merciful upon the ummah. He said "You all are about to fall into the fire and I am holding your backs and preventing you from falling into it". Rasulullah's Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam favour upon the ummat was that he showed men and women the way to lead their lives. Here are a few Ahaadith advising women:

HADEETH 1. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said that the woman who performed her five daily prayers and kept the fast of Ramadan and protected herself from evil acts i.e. adultery and obeyed her husband, has a choice to enter heaven from whichever door she pleases.(HULYA)

HADEETH 2. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "A woman has two veils: the first is the husband and

the second is the grave. The one that conceals more is the grave." (TABRANI)

HADEETH 3. Nabi Kareem Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "A religious widow is addressed as a martyr in the heavens" i.e. she is remembered with the honourable title of a martyr in heaven for any act she performs.

HADEETH 4. Ibn Abbas Radhiallahu anhu narrates that a woman came to Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam and said: "I have come as a representative of all women. We want to present a petition to you. Jihaad is fardh (compulsory) on men and only they obtain the reward of martyrdom. We women are deprived of it although we take responsibility for all their domestic affairs". Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "Convey this message on my behalf to all the women that they can achieve the reward of jihaad by obeying their husbands, but very few women consider this to be a reward."

HADEETH 5.It is reported from Hazrat Ibn Umar Radhiallahu Anhu that Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi

Wasallam said that when a woman leaves her home without her husband's consent then all the angels of the skies and the entire universe curse her for this act until she returns home. (TABRANI).

HADEETH 6.Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said that the fragrance of heaven will be forbidden for a woman who asks her husband for divorce without any valid reason. (TIRMIZI)

HADEETH 7. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said that if a woman died and her husband was pleased with her during her life, undoubtedly she has entered heaven.

HADEETH 8. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "O woman, your heaven and hell is your husband" (i.e. a woman will enter heaven if the husband is pleased, and hell if he is displeased with her). (TARGEEB)

HADEETH 9. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said that the best woman is the one that pleases her husband.

When he looks at her, she pleases him. When he commands her, she obeys him. When he absents himself (goes away on a journey etc.) she protects his wealth and his honour. (BAIHAQI)

HADEETH 10. The Messenger of Allah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said that Shaytaan (the devil) sits on his throne daily and dispatches his agents to work among human beings. One of the agents returns and says that I made a certain person commit a sin, another says I got so and so involved in this offence. Upon listening to all this Shaytaan says that you have done nothing great. Eventually one representative comes and says that I saw a husband and wife extremely devoted to each other. I sowed the seeds of enmity between them. On hearing this Shaytaan becomes happy and embracing his agent says that you have achieved something great. (MISHKAT)

The love between husband and wife is the biggest blow to Shaytaan. From this it is apparent how meritorious this love is.

HADEETH 11. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: The woman who applies perfume and passes by men is an adulteress. (TIRMIZI).

Today the woman who applies perfume and goes to the shopping centres, alleys and cinemas should ponder how grave a sin she is committing.

HADEETH 12. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: Once I saw a ghair mahram (strange) man and a young woman together in a place. Consequently I had a strong fear that Shaytaan will make use of this opportunity i.e. he will besmirch their character and destroy the honour of the woman.

HADEETH 13. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: Keep yourselves away from strange women. One companion asked: "O Rasul of Allah, tell me, can the husband's brother mix freely with his sister-in-law." Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam replied : "He is like death for a woman." (Bukhari and Muslim)

i.e. just as partaking of poison leads to death in this world, similarly the brother-in-law's mixing with a woman is poison for their character and a cause of destruction of the life of the hereafter.

HADEETH 14. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "It is haram for the women of my Ummah to take a bath in the public baths". (HAKIM)

i.e. women should keep away from places which are frequented by ghair mahram (strange) males. What purpose do they have in a place frequented by males?

HADEETH 15. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: Whichever woman applies scent should not join us for the Esha prayers. (ABU DAWOOD)

During the early Islamic era, women used to perform salaat behind Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam in congregation. On that occasion Rasulullah Sallallahu

Alaihi Wasallam said: "Those women who apply perfume should not come to the musjid for salaat," because there is a fear of instilling desire in the hearts of men due to the sweet fragrance of the perfume and this will be a cause of corruption. If Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam prevented women who applied perfume from attending the musjid during his noble era, there will be a greater need for precaution in this age of corruption.

HADEETH 16.Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "The woman who boastfully parades in front of males after adorning herself is like the darkness of Qiyamat."

HADEETH 17. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "A woman whose 3 children die in infancy or before reaching the age of puberty and who bears the loss with patience, hoping for reward will most certainly enter heaven. (MISHKAT)

Therefore if we are confronted with such a calamity, we should have patience and forbearance. To wail and mourn

is not the habit of a Muslim wife. It (the child) was the property of Allah which He took back. However, it is not sinful to shed tears.

HADEETH 18. Nabi Kareem Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "The best women of my ummah are those that are beautiful and whose dowry is less". (Dailami)

What wisdom is there in unnecessarily burdening the husband with an extravagant dowry especially if he cannot afford it? The success of the marriage is the mutual love of the partners which cannot be purchased by wealth.

HADEETH 19. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: Whoever consoled a woman that lost her child will be given the clothes of Paradise to wear. (MISHKAT)

i.e. when you go to offer your condolences to a woman who lost her child, do not join her in wailing and crying. On the contrary, speak to her in such a manner so as to

induce patience in her. Allah has promised a person who does this the garments of Jannah.

HADEETH 20. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said that Allah Subhanahu Taala says "Sight is a poisonous arrow of the devil. Whosoever, whether male or female protects himself or herself from evil glances will be granted a sweet Iman (faith) which will please his/her heart." (TABRANI)

The disease of glancing at men without regarding it as sinful is common among women. This can occur even though they (the woman) may be fully concealed. The arrow of Shaytaan works discreetly.

HADEETH 21. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "The worst person on the day of Qiyamah will be the one who reveals the private life of his wife to others." (Muslim)

Similarly some women have the habit of revealing their private matters to their friends. This is a major sin which should be abstained from.

HADEETH 22. Nabi Kareem Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "When a husband calls his wife at night to have relations with her and she refuses without a valid Shari reason, she is cursed throughout the night by the angels." (BUKHARI)

HADEETH 23. Nabi Kareem Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: There are 3 persons whose salaah is not accepted nor does any good act of theirs reach the sky. Firstly, a runaway slave until he returns to his master. Secondly, a woman whose husband is displeased with her and thirdly an intoxicated person as long as he does not repent from using intoxicants. (BAIHAQI)

Imagine how serious it is to displease the husband that the wife's salaah is not accepted nor any other good deed of hers.

HADEETH 24. Hadhrat Aisha Radhiallahu Anha says that Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam was sitting amongst the Muhajireen and Ansaar when a camel came and prostrated before him. Upon this the Sahaaba Radhiallahu Anhum said "O Prophet of Allah, if the animals and trees prostrate to you, then we have more rights to prostrate to you." On hearing this Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said "Worship your Sustainer and honour me. Had I given the command to anyone to prostrate, I would have commanded the wife to prostrate to her husband. The husband's right is so great that if he commands her to carry a stone from the yellow mountain to the black mountain and then from the black mountain to the white one, she has to fulfil this duty."

HADEETH 25. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said "No woman should ask her husband to divorce his second wife in order to achieve her rights because she will only receive what has been preordained for her." (BUKHARI and MUSLIM)

For example, a person who is married intends to marry a second woman. This woman tells him to divorce the first wife before she will marry him , or there are two women in one person's nikah and one says that she will only live with the husband on condition that he divorces the other. This has been prohibited by Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam because each one has her own destiny and should be thankful for that.

HADEETH 26. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "The rights of the husband on the wife are so great that if pus flows on the husband's body and the woman licks it clean, then too his rights will not be fully fulfilled." (TARGHEEB)

HADEETH 27. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "The world is a commodity and its best commodity is a pious woman who assists her husband in matters concerning the hereafter." (RAZEEN)

By being patient and enduring a life of poverty, women can grant their husbands more spare time for religious

duties. However this is not prevalent today. If the husband intends to do religious work, the wife presents a whole list of requirements to him which forces him to become engrossed in secular matters.

HADEETH 28. Whenever a strange man and woman meet in seclusion Shaytaan definitely is the third one by joining them. (TIRMIZI) i.e. Shaytaan arouses their passions and incites them to commit evil.

HADEETH 29. Nabi Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: Make purdah (i.e. conceal yourselves) from a blind man. Ummul Mumineen Hadhrat Aisha Radhhiallahu Anha said "O Prophet of Allah, he is blind. How can he see us?" Rasulullah Sallallahu Wasallam replied: "He may be blind, but you are not blind". (AHMAD,TIRMIZI)

Some women do not make purdah from blind people because of their inability to see. From this hadeeth we can deduce that just as it is forbidden for a man to look at a woman, similarly it is forbidden for a woman to gaze at a strange man.

HADEETH 30.Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "A woman should be kept concealed. When she emerges from the home without necessity, Shaytaan makes her appealing in the sight of men." (TIRMIZI)

Evil persons are attracted to her and begin following her or mention her in the gathering of men. This implies that she should leave the house only out of dire necessity. Today it has become a fashion to adorn the burqa and to embroider the trousers so as to attract men. The burqa was originally made for the purpose of purdah, but we have made it an object of adornment.

HADEETH 31. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "The most blessed nikah is the one with the least expenses." (BAIHAQI- IN SHUABUL IMAN)

Today, many of the destitute destroy the youth of their daughters because of not being able to uphold petty customs. They do not possess anything to give nor do

they want to have the nikah without an extravagant dowry in fear of being criticized by the other family members. In order to make our nikahs more blessed we should abandon these futile customs and on such occasions take a lesson from the simple nikah of Hadhrat Fatima al- Zahra Radhiallahu Anha whose dowry was one water-bag and one bed.

HADEETH 32. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "O women, after sitting in a gathering of women do not go home and explicitly describe any woman to your husbands." (MUSLIM)

This may incline your husband towards her and his affection for you may diminish. What noble advice has been given to us by our Rasul Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam.

HADEETH 33. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "May Allah curse those women who imitate men in appearance and those men who imitate women." (MISHKAT)

Women should not appear like men in their attire and physical appearance.

HADEETH 34. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said : "When heaven and hell were shown to me I saw that the majority of the inmates of hell were women." (MISHKAT)

The reason for this is that women are ungrateful and disobedient to their husbands. Although they will be leading a comfortable life but as soon as there is a minor problem, they will, on the slightest pretext show ingratitude.

HADEETH 35. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "Shall I inform you which woman will enter heaven?" The Sahaba replied: "Yes most certainly". Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said "The woman who has children, is lovable, when she becomes angry the husband consoles her and when the husband becomes

angry she says that as long as you do not become pleased with me, I will not even apply surmah (antimony) to my eyes." (TABRANI)

HADEETH 36. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "It is not permissible for any woman to fast optionally without her husband's permission, and it is not permissible for her to allow anyone into his house without his consent." (BUKHARI)

HADEETH 37. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "When any woman troubles her husband, the celestial bride (hur) of heaven calls out "Woe to you. Do not trouble him. He is temporarily with you. He is going to leave you and be our guest. Why do you trouble our beloved?" (IBN MAJAH)

HADEETH 38. The Messenger of Allah said that women are married for their lineage, wealth, beauty and piety. You should marry one who is pious (BUKHARI).

HADEETH 39. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "It is extremely abominable for a woman's shoulder to touch a man. It is better to touch a pig that is all messed up than for a woman to touch the body of a strange man." (TABRANI)

HADEETH 40. Nabi Kareem Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said "A woman cannot fulfill the rights of Allah without fulfilling the rights of her husband. Even if a woman is busy at the stove and the husband calls her, in that busy period also she must leave all her work and answer his request." (TABRANI)

If Muslim wives mould their lives in the light of the above-mentioned 40 ahaadeeth, every Muslim house can become a model of Jannat. All kinds of quarrels will cease and the misfortune of divorce will not prevail. Children brought up in such an environment will be an example of piety, discipline, love and sympathy. May Allah make every Muslim house practice upon this.

SOCIAL CONDUCT

There are two guardians appointed for every home : the man and the woman. For the upkeeping of the home it cannot be said that one has less responsibility than the other. The responsibility of each one can be realised from the following points:

1. The gale that has blown from Europe today concerning the equality of men and women has ruined many Muslim homes. Both have their separate limits within which they must pass their lives. If these limits cease to exist, the home becomes an example of hell as is the occurrence in Europe. Those people who are inviting women to this destruction in the veil of good advice are not helpers of women but great enemies.

2. The relationship between husband and wife has to be endured throughout their entire lives.

If both their hearts are united, there can be no greater bounty, and if there is some difference between them, (may Allah forbid) there can be no greater calamity. As far as possible obey your husband. Bear the little difficulties of this world to achieve the bounties of the hereafter.

3. The tongue is a means of disgrace and honour for a human. Great virtue can be derived if it is protected. Some women utter certain statements due to lack of understanding and without contemplation. These can offend their husbands. They utter statements at unsuitable occasions, accuse or say something enraging in their anger which can hurt the man's feelings. This could have disastrous consequences. Remember well that once a man's heart has been injured due to some statement you made and you console and please him after a few days, then too the situation will not be as before. You can make a thousand excuses and apologize, but the love will not be as it was before. The human memory is very strong in

remembering a past misery. It will continue to haunt his memory.

4. Women are said to be the garments of men. Just as a garment remains with a person during hot and cold weather, so should the husband and wife live together. Do not ask for more than what the husband can afford. Be satisfied with whatever you get even if it be bread. Do not look at a woman whose status is higher and become greedy. On the contrary, look at one who is lower than you and be thankful and patient. If at any time you like some jewellery or clothing and the husband cannot afford it, do not ask him for it nor grieve or express regret at not having it; in fact do not even mention it.

5. A woman should conceal her husband's secrets. If she is experiencing a difficult time she should not reveal this to anyone. She should always express joy so that the husband is not grieved. In this manner she will win him over and her respect will increase in his sight.

6. Also remember that if he brings anything for you, always express happiness whether you like the present or not. Do not criticize the present, for that will hurt his feelings and he will never want to bring anything for you, but if you praise it and take it happily it will please him and he will bring something better the next time. Do not be ungrateful to your husband because the one who is ungrateful to any person is ungrateful to Allah. This is the reason why more women will go to hell as mentioned in a hadeeth. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said "I saw many women in hell." Someone asked: "O Prophet of Allah, why are there going to be more women in hell?" Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said " They curse others excessively and are very ungrateful to their husbands". From this, one can gather how sinful it is to be ungrateful to a husband.

7. A successful wife is one that recognizes the husband's nature. You should try and understand his temperament. If he is angry, do not utter something that will increase his anger. Always watch his mood before speaking. If he responds to jokes by expressing happiness then continue doing so, otherwise not. If he is displeased with you, do

not sit with a sullen face. Instead plead with him for forgiveness and try to win him over whether it is your fault or not. This will result in his love increasing for you.

8. There are many etiquettes of love without which the claim to love is baseless. Understand well that the relationship between husband and wife cannot arise from a hollow love. With love the respect of the husband is also essential. It is totally wrong to regard the husband's status as your own.

9. The husband's status is more than your father's. Therefore do not ask him to serve you in any manner. If he, out of love begins serving you, do not let him do so. Ask yourself if your father were to do the same would you allow it?

10. Some women first search their husband's pockets when they return from a journey and ask them how much money and how many goods they have brought not realizing that the greatest treasure is the husband himself who has returned safely. Why not be happy and thankful

for that? When the husband returns from a journey inquire about his health, his stay and if he experienced any difficulties. Firstly ask him if he is hungry so that you can feed him. When he lies down after having meals, massage his hands and feet. Fan him if it is hot. In short, make him as comfortable as possible.

11. The rights of the husband's parents are very great. When their rights over your husband are so great that without obeying them he cannot be forgiven, then what is your position? You have been commanded to obey your husband and he has been commanded to obey his parents. From this you can gauge how great their rights are upon you. The husband's other relatives also have rights upon you according to their stages.

12. Whatever impression you make in the beginning will be always remembered. From the outset have respect for the elders and mercy for the young. Do not leave any of your work for others nor let your possessions lie around.

13. You may have read the condition of Rasulullah's daughter who used to grind wheat on the mill-stone. Who is a greater princess than her? Therefore do not shy away from any hard work. Do not be hesitant in doing what your mother-in-law and sisters-in-law do. Do it yourself without them telling you. In this way the in-law's love for you will increase.

14. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam has regarded an eavesdropper as a very evil person. Therefore if two persons are speaking softly to each other, separate from them and do not try to find out what they were speaking about. Also do not unnecessarily feel that they were speaking about you as this creates hatred in the heart which wipes out all good deeds.

15. Regard your husband's house as the centre of your hopes. Do not live with dissatisfaction even though the new home and new people cause uneasiness.

16. Every action of yours will be scrutinized. Therefore inculcate a habit of being moderate. Be careful when

conversing. Do not chatter too much because it is an evil habit nor be so quiet because this is regarded as pride.

17. If you dislike something at the in-laws, do not backbite about it at home. To inform your mother of every minor thing about your in-laws and for the mother to find out about them is an extremely abominable act. It leads to mutual arguments and disputes and eventually leads to separation.

18. The adage "a slovenly woman's home is in darkness" is famous. Never be negligent in cleanliness. Keep the husband's possessions neat and tidy. Also keep the room clean. You should do all the work yourself. Safeguard all your belongings. Fold the clothes and keep them away. Do not make excuses in doing any task, nor lie because it removes trust and even when the truth is spoken there won't be certainty.

19. The love between husband and wife offends Shaytaan the most. He plans to sow hatred between them, causes doubt and suspicion. Bear this in mind and do not slander

on minor doubts, for instance by saying: you joke too much with so and so (female), or you go there very often, or you always sit there. If the husband is innocent you can imagine how hurt he will feel. Added to this is the sin of the hereafter. Even if he has such an evil habit, it will not be remedied in this manner. To do this you will have to use wisdom. Discuss the matter with him in secret. If this method fails to make him realize the evil of the habit, be patient. Do not go around telling everyone and disgracing him. Do not become stern and harsh in order to suppress him as this will only make him adamant and you will eventually suffer. Remember that the simplest way of making him submit is to be loyal and obedient. To express anger and become enraged is a grave mistake and shows lack of intellect.

20. There are many instances to be found where a woman's gentleness and patience have changed the man. If the husband is so wicked that he reaches the extremes in oppressing her, then Allah Ta'ala has destroyed him. Women should not become impatient under any circumstances.

THE UPBRINGING OF CHILDREN

The nature of children is like a plain paper. Whatever is imprinted on it initially will remain forever. Therefore it is important to create good images on this clean and pure page. Whatever habit, good or evil is inculcated in childhood remains for life. Hereunder a few points relating to the upbringing of children will be mentioned.

1. The first nourishment of a child is the mother's milk. She should partake of halaal and pure food so that the milk which is formed from it is pure. Milk has a great effect on the life of children.

2. Muslim children have to carry the banner of bravery during their lives. They should be taught to be courageous. Women have a habit of frightening children, sometimes from the police and sometimes from some other fearful thing. This is an abominable habit and creates cowardice.

3. Just as a weak plant rots due to excessive water, so are children spoilt when given excessive food and at improper times. Appoint a time for feeding the child so that he remains healthy. Do not overfeed him.

4. Do not decorate them excessively. Yes, do consider their cleanliness and bathe them daily in summer.

5. Do not inculcate a habit in boys of wearing expensive clothing and in girls of wearing jewellery, etc. from the beginning. It is not a commendable habit of having vanity and pride from childhood.

6. Children are covetous by nature. Therefore make an attempt to discard this habit of theirs by teaching them to give food, clothing, money etc. to the poor. In the same manner teach them to distribute food etc. to their brothers and sisters in order to learn the habit of generosity.

7. Children can learn well by means of examples. Explain the evils of eating excessively to them, but do not mention anyone's name.

8. Do not give children so much that they develop the habit of asking nor frustrate them so much that they lose hope. Do not fulfil all their wishes as this spoils their nature.

9. Friends have a great effect. Keep your children away from those who have evil habits, or escape from studies or are used to ceremonious food and clothing.

10. Anger, speaking lies, to be envious of others, stealing, back-biting, defending ones statement, to speak of futile things excessively, to laugh unnecessarily and to deceive are all dangerous characteristics. If the child commits any of them, admonish him immediately.

11. Just as a child is spoilt by impoliteness similarly is he spoilt by excessive affection and love. If he breaks

anything or hits someone, punish him accordingly so that he does not repeat the act. If love and affection is shown at such an occasion, it will permanently spoil the child.

12. Encourage acts of piety and inculcate the habit of salaah from the age of seven.

13. When the child is capable of going to Madrasah, make him first learn the Quran. Do not let him abscond.

14. Occasionaly read the stories of the pious to him.

15. Books that besmirch the character are very common. Do not allow him to read books that contain love stories, subject matter that is contrary to the shariat or useless stories and poems etc. Instead, teach him to read books of deen and good morals.

16. Moderation is praiseworthy in every act. Do not bind him to studies all the time. When he returns from

madressa, permit him to play for a while so that he becomes active, but the entertainment should not be spiritually or physically harmful.

17. Besides deeni (religious) education, also teach him a trade or profession. Learning a skill will enable him to earn at the time of need and difficulty and support himself and his family.

18. Educate girls, the minimum being such that they can write letters and be able to calculate the expenses of the house.

19. Inculcate in children the habit of doing their work themselves.

20. Remember that when a child does a praiseworthy act he should be congratulated and shown love, in fact he should be rewarded as an encouragement. When he commits a wrong act, he should be reprimanded in

privacy and warned not to repeat the crime. If he repeats the act, punish him accordingly.

21. Teach them to respect elders in general and the fathers in particular. The mother should make the child fear the father so that he is respected.

22. Do not allow the child to do any act in secret, whether it is playing, eating, or any other work. Remember that if he does anything in secret he regards it as unlawful. If it is something wrong he should be taught to forget such a habit and if it is good like eating or drinking, he should be taught not to hide and do things suspiciously.

23. Teach the child to do menial tasks and to exercise for physical well-being e.g. calisthenics or walking for a kilometer.

24. Another way of pleasing the child is to give him a few cents occasionally so that he spends them according to his

desire, but ensure that he does not buy something without your knowledge nor anything harmful.

25. Remind the child as often as possible of the following etiquettes when partaking of meals:

To begin by saying Bismillah, to eat with the right- hand, to eat from directly in front of himself, not to stare at the food as greedy people do, not to eat hastily, to chew the food properly, not to take another morsel before swallowing the first one, to take the morsel properly so that gravy does not spill onto the clothing and the fingers do not mess unnecessarily, not to move the face when chewing a morsel, not to be bare-headed whilst eating, to wash the hands before and after meals, to drink water with the right hand and in 3 breaths and to praise Allah after eating.

ETIQUETTE OF A GATHERING

Good manners and habits are the best jewels. Whichever woman adorns herself with them will be regarded as the most beloved by all. Whoever you meet, meet them with respect and speak gently. Do not clean your nose in the presence of others. If the need arises, move away from there. If you want to yawn or sneeze, place your hand over your mouth and lower your voice. Do not crack your fingers nor look at someone every now and then unnecessarily. Remain sitting in your place with respect. Do not speak too much nor take an oath for trivial things. Whenever possible do not begin speaking. When someone else speaks, listen attentively so as not to hurt their feelings. However, do not listen if it is something sinful. It will be better to prevent her, or to move away from there. Until a person has finished speaking, do not interrupt. When someone arrives and there is no place in the gathering, move slightly from your place. Sit close together so that there is sufficient place. When meeting someone or departing greet with Assalamu-Alaikum and in answer say Waalaikumus-Salaam. Avoid using words like "hello" and "bye" which are in vogue nowadays.

THE ETIQUETTE WITH THE HUSBAND'S FAMILY

Understand from the outset that noble girls arrive in the bridal car and depart in the funeral bier, i.e. they love the in-laws. To achieve this you have to consider these factors: Respect your mother-in-law in all conditions as you respect your own mother. Always give preference to her pleasure whether you are in difficulty or ease. Do not say something that may distress or displease her. When addressing her, use words that are used for elders. If she admonishes you, heed her advice with silence. Do not back- answer her even though it is something unpleasant and bitter. Serve her as you would serve your mother. If she assigns a task to someone else, go ahead and do it yourself.

Respect your father-in-law as your own father. The same etiquette applies to your father-in-law as we have

explained above with regards to the mother-in-law. As far as possible try and comfort him and serve him. If you intend going to some function, take the husband's or father-in-law's or mother-in-law's permission. Proceed only if permission is granted. Treat your husband's brothers wives and his sisters like your own sisters. If they are young treat them like your young sisters, because they will treat you as you treat them. Be patient if the sisters-in-law annoy you. In exchange of harsh treatment react with kindness. Do not mention anyone's faults to others nor speak ill of anyone in his/her absence as this is backbiting which is a major sin. Back-biting is the cause of grief and mutual quarrels. Some women say that we are not lying because this fault is found in that person. Remember that ghibat (backbiting) is to mention someones faults behind his back and if that fault is not in him, it constitutes slander, which is a more serious crime than back-biting. Regarding back-biting there is an incident of a woman who kept on back-biting while she was fasting. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam did not permit her to break her fast saying that she is not fasting (in reality). When she was ordered to vomit by Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam, a clot of blood fell from her mouth. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi

Wasallam remarked that she had been back-biting all day long and drinking the blood of people.

Treat the children of your father-in-law or those related to him with extreme compassion. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "The person who does not respect the elders nor treats the young with kindness is not of us". As far as possible treat children kindly and elders with respect according to their status. If there is a maid in the house, do not burden her with tasks beyond her ability. If a certain task is difficult assist her with it. Do not speak harshly to her. If she is ill or in some difficulty, help and serve her.

ORGANISATION OF THE HOME

If the house is well-organized it will flourish even though the income is little and the poverty will not be apparent. If the house is not well organized, it will be full of misfortune and poverty, even if the inhabitants are

wealthy. The most important factor is estimating the expenses and considering their occasions. There should be moderation in the expenses so that they do not exceed the income, nor should they be so minimal that it leads to miserliness. Allah Ta'ala has expressed contempt in the Holy Quran for those who are extravagant and those who are miserly. Love for wealth will make you hoard it and prevent you from spending it on your necessities. Spend according to your need. Do not desire what the wealthy possess. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "In worldly matters look at the one lower than you, you will be satisfied, but in deeni matters look at those higher than you so that you can be encouraged to do pious acts." Keep everything in its proper place. Only keep those utensils outside which you require often. Keep the rest inside, only removing them when necessary. After the need is fulfilled return them to their places.

THE RIGHTS OF THE PARENTS

The parents have great rights. After obedience to the Creator of the Universe, it is compulsory to obey the parents. Allah Ta'ala has commanded that parents should always be obeyed. If both or one of them becomes old in your lifetime, do not (regarding them as weak) even say "oof" to them nor reproach them. Always speak gently to them.

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "Allah's pleasure lies in the pleasure of the parents and the displeasure of Allah lies in displeasing the parents." In another hadeeth Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said that kindness to parents is greater than optional salaah, charity, fasting, haj, umrah and jihaad in the path of Allah. He also said that the person who spends the morning in such a condition that his parents are pleased with him, then two doors of Jannat are opened for him,

and if only one of them, the mother or the father is alive, then one door of heaven is opened.

If he spends the morning in such a condition that his parents are displeased with him, two doors of hell are opened and if only the mother or the father is displeased then one door of hell is opened. This command applies to all conditions, whether the parents are just and kind to him or they are unjust and oppressive. In the hadeeth Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam repeated this statement thrice: "Even if the parents oppress him."

The attention of the previous ummat was also drawn to the rights of the parents because it is related to the nature of man. Allah Ta'ala addressed Musa Alaihi Salaam saying: "O Musa! The Muslim who does good to his parents and disobeys Me, then repents, I will note him down as a thankful and good servant and whoever obeys Me and disobeys his parents and then repents I will still regard him as disobedient."

Always beware of the curse of the parents, because Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said : "A mother's dua for her children is very swiftly accepted". At another instance he said: "Serve the mother because heaven lies below her feet". In these type of ahadeeth great emphasis is laid on obedience and service to parents. The reason for this is that they bore great hardships for your sake. How many sleepless nights they spent for you. If you became slightly ill, how much attention they paid to you. When you were in any slight difficulty they were prepared to undergo a thousand difficulties to remove one difficulty of yours. Their condition is explained in this couplet:

"If you were roused a little they became afraid, when you had a little fear they were placed in difficulty".

For your comfort they did not for a moment regard day as day and night as night. How much of sorrow did they have to experience to keep you happy. A slight change in your face would change all their joy into grief. One falling tear from your eye would strike their hearts like lightning.

Just as the parents desire your physical comfort, similarly they desire your spiritual well-being as well. Besides giving you good clothing they also disciplined you with good character and a sound education. It is for this reason that you should read books which teach you nobility, discipline, sympathy and house-keeping etc. and you are prohibited from books containing false stories, legends and subject-matter that besmirches the character. They do all this so that your character is not affected because they realize that children are a trust from Allah who have not only been entrusted to them for up-bringing but also for education and discipline. If they are deficient in their training then it is as if they are disregarding an important compulsion of Allah Ta'ala and are breaching Allah's trust. On the day of Qiyamat they will have lowered heads in front of Allah due to regret. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said that every one is responsible for his subjects and the parents are guardians of their children. On the day of judgment they will be questioned as to how they educated their children. In view of this, they disregard their comfort to accommodate your comfort and peace. They have made arrangements for the tuition of a pious tutor from whose company you can benefit so that

you can be called a well-mannered girl and be an example of nobility and character, thereby achieving the honour and respect of this world and the hereafter. Sisters, should we not appreciate all the efforts of the parents? Should we not obey them and serve them?

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said that the one who forgets the favour of a human being is also ungrateful to Allah. If we disobey our sympathetic and kind parents and do not appreciate them nor serve them, who can be more ungrateful than us. The worst sin is to disobey Allah Ta'ala. He has emphasized obedience to parents and thankfulness to them in several places in the Holy Quran. Here are some of the verses:

"Your creator has commanded you to worship none besides Him, and be helpful and favourable to your parents. If one of them becomes old in your presence, do not even say "oof" to them nor reproach them but say noble words to them. Be humble to them and continue making this dua for them: O my nourisher, have mercy on them just as they nurtured me in my childhood".

In this verse it has been clearly mentioned that the greatest right of Allah upon anyone is to worship none besides Him, that is, not to ascribe any partner to Him. Then the rights of the parents are explained. When a child is delivered from the mother's womb the parents nurture the child in all ways. Thus He has emphasized their obedience and gratitude. In another verse He states:

"We have commanded man to obey Me and be thankful to his parents as his mother bore burden upon burden and kept him in her womb and his weaning is after two years. Remember that you have to return to Me."

In this verse the rights of the mother are more than the father, because the difficulty of bearing the child has been predestined for the mother. Hence the favour of the mother and her gratitude is more than the father.

In another verse Allah Ta'ala has mentioned this in more detail:

"We have commanded man to be kind to his parents. His mother bore him with great difficulty and problems and the period of his stay in the womb and weaning is 30 months. O my Guardian, grant me the ability to thank You for this favour which You have bestowed upon me and my parents, and that I do such pious actions which please You and grant my children also this ability. I turn towards You in obedience".

In this verse also, the mother's rights have been mentioned as being greater. For so many months she carried him in her womb, walked about with him, underwent great difficulties, breast-fed him for 2 years and cared for him in every possible way. She sacrificed all her comforts for his peace and comfort. The father also shared in many of these difficulties and made all the requirements for up-bringing available. There is no doubt that these duties are done naturally but the requirement of nature is that the children perceive the love and compassion of the parents and be grateful for their efforts and sacrifices. This is a virtue in this world also and in the hereafter it has great merits.

On one occasion whilst climbing the pulpit, Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said, while placing his foot on the first step "Aameen". Then he placed his foot on the next step and said "Aameen" and then he placed his foot on the third step and said "Aameen" . On completion of the sermon he stepped down. The Sahaba Radhiallahu Anhum asked: "O Rasulullah, today we have witnessed something new which we did not experience before". Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam remarked "Jibraeel Alaihi Salaam appeared in front of me. When I put my foot on the first step he said "Woe to that person who witnesses the month of Ramadan and yet is not successful". I said Aameen. On the second step he said "Destruction to the person in whose presence your name is mentioned and he does not send salutations upon you. I said Aameen. When I placed my foot on the third step he said : "Destruction to the person in whose presence both his parents or one of them become old and they cannot make him enter jannat. I said Aameen."

Can there be any limit to the misfortune of a person whom Jibreel curses and Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam says Aameen?

It is mentioned in a hadith that from among the doors of jannat, the best door is the father. If you desire, safeguard it otherwise destroy it. A Sahabi asked what the rights of the parents are. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam replied: "They are your heaven or your hell i.e. earning their pleasure is a means of gaining jannah and earning their displeasure is a means of entry into hell."

My sisters! Whatever details have been mentioned regarding the parents will also guide you in your new home. Wherever you get married, there too you will have to practice according to these guidelines to be successful.

A NEW HOUSE, NEW FACES

It has been predestined for women to be brought up in their parents home and live somewhere else. At the time of your departure to your new house your mother, sisters and near relatives will be shedding tears in the sorrow of your separation and bidding you farewell. On the contrary when you reach there you will be welcomed with smiles and laughter. The whole house will be full of love and joy. Ecstasy will be emanating from all sides. Everyones face will be cheerful and their speech humorous. Each and every person will be smiling and you will reach this house like a light that is brought to a gathering. You will be the centre of attention. Young and old, everyone will desire to see you. Every movement of yours will be observed and every action criticized. But all this tumult will only be for a few days. During this commotion it is your obligation to be cautious. You should spend the preliminary days with extreme dignity, free of pride and a cheerful disposition free of childishness.

The first person whom you will have contact with in your new house will be your life-partner and your companion.

With this person you have to spend your whole life and attach all your hopes to him. If he desires your life can be one of lament and sorrowful destruction. In short your future progress or retrogress depends entirely on him. Therefore your first obligation will be to try and understand your life-partner and to mould all your desires according to his wishes as far as possible.

The most important factor is to recognize the nature of a person. There will be comfort for each one in recognizing the nature of the other and living accordingly. Today there are numerous cases where the lives of the husband and wife were destroyed merely because there existed a difference in their nature and each one did not understand the others temperament. You may have indeed heard of or witnessed incidents like these in every city and village where the union was destroyed.

We have information of a girl whose husband neither calls her nor separates from her. He also does not send any money for her expenses. Life has become worse than death. The cause for this conflict is not very complex. The matter has deteriorated due to a minor issue. The girl admits that the husband initially loved her intensely, but she did not appreciate his love. She always went against his opinion. Initially the matter was not serious and the husband bore it but the girl did not change her habit. This resulted in more quarrels until it became impossible for the husband and wife to live together. We are not advocating that the husband was not at fault. He may also have been guilty. In short this situation arose because they did not understand each others temperament. The woman should realise that she is the one to suffer more harm because the husband is free to marry while she has many difficulties to face.

From this example you may have understood what my aim is. I am not advocating that the wife must obey every trivial command. However I am certain that if she acts intelligently and understands the habits and temperament of the husband, the situation will not deteriorate.

There is one distinguishing feature in males and that is he does not tolerate anything that goes against his opinion. If any woman does not want her life to be ruined, it is in her interest not to openly oppose the husband in any matter. A sensible approach should be adopted to persuade him. This is called "practical wisdom".

I remember an incident of Delhi which is significant because of the many lessons that can be learnt from it. A girl by the name of Fathima was married to a man from a decent, well-educated family. Fathima was also well-educated, understanding and had a good nature. When she arrived at her in-laws, a new world was revealed to her. All the faces were strange and their ways unique. Besides the mother-in-law, there were 3 sisters-in-law. The eldest was Azraa who had seperated from her husband after having a dispute with him. This was probably due to her ill-temper. The second sister-in-law was Zuhra who was not as yet married. The youngest was Sugra who was about 7-8 years old.

Fathima noticed from the very outset that the mother-in-law was ill-tempered. She quarrelled very often with her daughters and son. Azraa was convinced that she could not live with her in-laws after her dispute with them. Zuhra also did not seem to be amicable and polite. Fathima initiallly acquainted herself with Sugra who provided her with the information she required. The father-in-law was a sensible and pious man. Fathima's husband, Aslam was educated in a western institute and was fashion conscious. He was always engrossed in adorning himself. He had no concern for domestic affairs. Fathima was badly trapped in a house where each individual had a unique character. If there was someone immature in her place, the situation would have deteriorated immediately. However Fathima was sensible and determined. After assessing the situation at her in-laws she intended to remedy it.

She was surprised to learn that the combined income of the father-in-law and husband was sufficient to run the house, yet it was in a deplorable state. The expenses seemed to surpass the income. The father-in-law was unaware of the situation. He used to hand over his salary

to his wife and never enquired where the money was spent. The mother-in-law spent the money as she pleased. Everyone feared her and dreaded her temper. There were 2 maids in the house who were thieves. As for the male servant, he was clamourous and never listened to the women. If they said anything he would answer them back. It was not the work of any ordinary person to improve the condition of such a corrupt house. It was impossible for her to decelerate the moving train of this house all of a sudden.

She observed each individual with a keen eye. The ill-tempered mother-in-law used to stare at Fathima with stern eyes. The stare alone prevented her from taking any action. Azraa never spoke to Fathima in a respectable manner. She used to complain day and night of her own in-laws and this left no opportunity for Fathima to confront her. Fathima tolerated her insults. She knew that it was a great achievement to repel evil with nobility. She practised on the following verses of the Quran:

When they (the pious servants of Allah)listen to futile talk, they turn away from it and say "We have our work

and you have your work. Be peaceful, we seek not the ignorant." (Al Quran 28:55)

It is mentioned in a hadeeth that whoever listens to someones insult and bears it with patience, the angels reply on his behalf. Allah loves those who have patience and raises their status. In short, Fathima used to listen to them but never replied. The second sister-in-law was cunning, extremely clamorous, quarrelsome and accused for every petty thing. However Fathima became acquainted with her temperament.

She did not give her an opportunity to begin a quarrel. However she used to hurl epithets from far off. Fathima used to practice on the Quranic verse: "Fight off evil with good and repel bad character with good character".

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam has said in this regard that a brave person amongst you is not the one that floors the next person. However a brave person is one who suppresses his anger. At another instance he said that whoever tolerates his enemy's evil speech is a brave

person. The youngest sister-in-law was on Fathima's side because she won her confidence from the outset.

The mutual love of the husband and wife did not remain after a while. There was no open confrontation because Fathima, due to her self-respect did not let such a situation arise. However the relationship between the two was not healthy. The main reason for this relationship not developing was the mother-in-law. She used to incite the son secretly. She used to attempt to cause friction between the two at every opportunity. The mother's provocation and his own attitude became a stumbling block.

The man's condition deteriorated to such an extent that he used to spend all his time, besides his employment time with other men. Now he even used to have his meals away from home. He used to come home from school, wash and change quickly, have tea hastily and leave home to enjoy himself. He used to return home at eleven or twelve o'clock at night. If he desired he came. Then he used to sleep through till the morning. There was no time left to speak to his wife.

First of all Fathima attempted to bring her husband onto the right track. She did not begin quarelling with her husband, but instead spoke more cheerfully to him. It never occurred to the husband for once that his coming home late at night displeased the wife. In fact he used to ponder as to what a strange wife he has who does not even care about anything. Whether I come home late or early she does not even bother. But the wife was silently planning.

The hadeeth of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam in which he said: "O woman! Remember your husband is your heaven and your hell." i.e. earning your husband's pleasure will entitle you to jannat and earning his displeasure will entitle you to jahannam, had a great effect on Fathima.

She also knew another hadeeth in which it is mentioned that amongst women the best is the one that keeps her husband happy when he looks at her, obeys him when he commands her, and does not earn his anger by disobeying

him with regards to his life and wealth. In other words the woman that pleases her husband with her life and wealth is the best in the sight of Allah and his Rasul Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam. Therefore why should she not be pleased when the husband was happy. One day she found the husband in a good mood and asked him fearfully if she could make a comment:

ASLAM: With pleasure, what is the matter?

FATHIMA: It is nothing serious but it is worrying me. You remain outside the whole day. I know that men have hundreds of jobs to do, and if they remain away from home during the day there is no problem. Men cannot remain at home like women, but the problem is that you remain away from home for a major portion of the night as well and I feel afraid of being alone.

ASLAM: What can I do, I do not have sufficient time during the day. At night I go out for some fresh air as you know it to be my habit. And there, some friend or another takes me away. I also want to return early but they do not

let me go until it becomes quite late. I regret that because of me you have to take the trouble of waiting. From tomorrow I will try coming early Insha-Allah.

FATHIMA: May Allah fulfil our intentions.

This incident was forgotten.The wife let the husband do as he desired and did not remind him about the incident. However there was a slight change in that instead of returning at eleven or twelve o' clock he began returning at 9 o'clock. How effective was the wife's advice and why should it not be because when something is uttered at the appropriate occasion it is effective.

After a few days it became known that he had fallen into the company of some vagabonds and that he was wasting his health and his valuable time at evil places. Fathima was not such a fool to engage herself in combat with him and immediately demand an explanation. If she had done this she would have lost her husband as well as her respect. She carried on planning secretly. She never spoke out of turn and did not even bring a word of complaint on

her tongue. She acted innocent as if she was unaware of her husband's actions. She was looking for an opportune moment when the advice would not go heedless.

One day she found an opportunity and began saying: "All these companions of yours are like the wind. Their company is highly poisonous for you. They are all self-seeking without the slightest concern for you. I know that what I am saying now may hurt you but you are educated and understanding. I am deficient in intelligence. To advice you is tantamount to teaching Luqman, The Wise and to light a lamp in front of the moon, but what can I do, I am compelled. I cannot see you going astray or falling into evil company with my eyes closed. Can I be happy to see you in such a condition? Can I overlook the harm that is afflicting your life and property? I cannot remain blind to all this. Remember what I am saying very clearly. If (May Allah forbid) you fall into some kind of difficulty then those who are claiming to be your bosom-friends and saying that "where your perspiration falls we will sacrifice our blood," are all companions of a moving vehicle. When the time comes no one will assist. What must people be saying after seeing you in such evil

company? They may not be mentioning anything in front of you out of respect, but behind your back they will definitely be rebuking you.

What can be a more decent and interesting pastime for educated people than reading books. How wonderful will it be if you spend your time at home reading books instead of wasting it in evil company. You will not only be cheerful but you will be safe from these indecent people. Do not think that I am telling you this for personal motives. Even if it is for personal motives then what harm is there. After all I am your wife. There can be no one more helpful and obliging than me. I do not want you to sit at my feet the whole day. Not at all. Men are not imprisoned in the house like women. The one who intends to imprison them is insane. It is essential for your good health to walk in the fresh air for a while but be moderate.

The husband, on hearing this conversation agreed because he was understanding. At that moment he became so ashamed that he could not answer. If something is said at the appropriate time how can there be an answer for it? He kept quiet and from that moment regret for all his

actions was visible on his countenance and he began saying to himself: "What must I do? I cannot change my ways all of a sudden." His inner self was reproaching him. At that very moment he resolved to lessen all relationships gradually.

If Fathima was not far-sighted and understanding and was like the women of today who begin quarrelling immediately, she would have lost her husband. She did not even inform her husband that she knew all about his activities. Whenever the husband came home, she immediately welcomed him cheerfully and obeyed whatever he said. She never interrupted him nor said anything to hurt his feelings.

Fathima knew that her husband was like a sick person who was in need of the doctor's compassion and cure. She was compassionate to him and simultaneously began curing him. Eventually she was successful and due to her wisdom did not disgrace herself.

Remember that the house you are now going to, was under the control of your mother-in-law. All the affairs of the house went according to her wishes. More importance was attached to her opinion in all the matters of the house. Your life-partner may have also obeyed her.

It is thus apparent that the whole system of the home cannot change all of a sudden. The affairs of the house will continue to run as before. The people of the house will continue obeying the elders. You do not have to feel offended about this. If you have this hope that upon your arrival all the individuals of the house will relinquish their choices and regard you as their superior, this is a misunderstanding on your part and from such hope you will achieve nothing except anguish and anxiety.

By accepting the guardianship of the elders one benefit is that if any difficult situation arises, their experience simplifies the matter. And if there is any mistake in work done in consultation with the elders, you will not be disgraced. The cause of most disputes between men and women in this world is the lack of understanding on behalf of the women. Men become frustrated by the lack

of understanding and uncouth manners of women. They become annoyed and choose another road. They do not think of coming home for years and due to the evil character of the women, become stone-hearted.

Some women feel that they hail from wealthy homes, they have brought so many commodities, thus it is below their dignity to obey the husband, mother-in-law and father-in-law. This is sometimes so extreme that they do not even speak to their husbands properly. Leave aside serving him, they do not even do their own work. They make him dance to their tune. As long as the husband fulfils all their whims and fancies and obeys them, there will be peace in the house.

These kind of women regret one day when all their wealth cannot prevent the separation from the husband. The husband becomes frustrated and annoyed while she sits at home shedding tears of blood. The reality is that no matter how much dowry is given it cannot decrease the rights of the husband.

THE METHOD OF LIVING TOGETHER

Sayings of Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (Rahmatullahi alaih)

1. Before shutting the door at night, make certain that no cat or dog is left in the house. Sometimes they can harm a person at night. Even if they do not cause any harm, they make a din all night and prevent you from sleeping.

2. Occasionally place your clothing and books out in the sunlight.

3. Keep the house clean and tidy.

4. Do not make yourself accustomed to leisure if you desire good health. Do some manual work. The best manual task for women is to use the hand-mill (to grind flour). It keeps the body healthy.

5. When going to meet someone do not sit for too long nor converse at length. This may frustrate or disturb her in her work.

6. All the family members should be particular in fixing a place for everything. This will prevent time being wasted when the object is required.

7. Do not place a bed, chair, utensil, brick, stone or slab on the way. This can injure someone who accidently knocks it, especially in the dark.

8. When anyone tells you to do something, reply immediately either in the affirmative or in the negative so that he/she knows whether you are going to do the task or not.

9. Sprinkle less salt on the food, because if there is less it can always be remedied but if there is an excess it is difficult to correct.

10. Do not cut chillies and place them in daal or vegetable curry. Grind them instead, because by cutting, the seed remains in the pieces. If any piece comes in the mouth, it burns severely.

11. If you happen to drink water at night, look carefully into the utensil and if there is no light, place a cloth etc. over it before drinking so that no particles go in the mouth.

12. Do not throw a child up in the air jokingly nor let him hang out of the window. This can seriously injure the child.

13. When a utensil is emptied always wash it and place it upside down. When you want to use it again, wash it first.

14. After placing a utensil on the ground when dishing food into it, do not place it on the table or daster khwan without first wiping the bottom.

15. If you are visiting someone at his/her house do not ask for anything. It may be insignificant but it can be embarrassing if the person does not have the required item.

16. Do not spit or clean your nose where other people are sitting. If there is a need, excuse yourself and go to one side.

17. Whilst partaking of meals do not mention something which can offend the listener and make him feel uncomfortable.

18. Do not mention anything in front of a sick person or his family that make them lose hope in his life. He will be heartbroken. Comfort him by saying that Insha-Allah your illness will soon be cured.

19. If you want to mention something about a person while he is also present then do not indicate to him by winking or by gestures. He will unnecessarily be placed in doubt. This can only be done if the statement is permissible in Shariat, otherwise if it is unlawful then to make such a statement will be sinful.

20. Do not gesticulate too much when speaking.

21. Do not clean your nose with your dress or sleeve.

22. Do not cleanse yourself where there is urine and stool. Move one step away to purify yourself.

23. Always dust your shoes before wearing them. There can be a harmful creature inside. Similarly dust your clothes and bed as well.

24. If a woman has a boil on her private part do not ask her where it is as this can be embarrassing.

25. Do not sit in a place where people are moving about. This causes unnecessary obstruction.

26. Do not let any smell arise on the body or clothing. If you do not have a clean pair of clothes, wash the one you are wearing and take a bath.

27. Do not sweep where people are sitting.

28. Do not throw pits and peels on anyone nor on the road.

29. Do not play with a knife, scissors, needle or any sharp instrument. You may be careless and hurt yourself.

30. If any visitor comes from a distant place ask him if he wants to relieve himself and direct him to the toilet. Do

not try to prepare a lavish meal as this will be time consuming. Prepare a simple meal so that he can partake of it immediately. When he intends departing, arrange his breakfast early. In short there should be no disturbance in his comfort and need.

31. Do not emerge from the bathroom or toilet tying your clothing on the back, rather wear the clothing properly inside.

32. If someone asks you something, first answer him and then proceed with other work.

33. Whenever you say anything or answer anyone, open your mouth properly and speak clearly so that the next person understands what you are saying.

34. If you have to give someone something, do not throw it from far. Damage will be caused if the other person does not hold it. Give it from close by.

35. One should not speak or scream between two persons that are teaching and learning or conversing.

36. If someone is involved in some work or conversation, do not go and begin speaking with him immediately. Wait for an opportunity and only begin speaking when he turns his attention towards you.

37. When giving anyone something, do not remove your hands until the person has held it properly. Sometimes due to a slight negligence, damage is caused.

38. When eating, gather the bones in one place. Similarly do not spread peels etc. of anything all around. When all are gathered, place them on one side.

39. Do not run or put your head up when walking. You may fall.

40. Close a book carefully. Very often the first and last pages get folded.

41. Do not praise a (ghair mahram) man in front of your husband. Some men get highly offended.

42. Similarly do not praise other women in front of your husband. He may become inclined to her and leave you.

43. Do not ask someone about her home, wealth, jewellery and clothing when meeting her if you are not closely associated to her.

44. Specify 3 or 4 days a month for cleaning the entire house. Remove all webs, lift the mats, sweep under them and put everything in its place.

45. You should not take a written note or book away from in front of someone to read it yourself. It may contain something personal which is not meant for you.

46. Be very careful when ascending and descending steps. It is better if you place your one foot on the steps, then place the other one on the same step as well. Then advance to the next step in a like manner. It is not suitable for girls and ladies to have one foot on one step and another on another step. Prevent the children also in their infancy.

47. Do not dust your clothing or a book where someone is sitting in such a manner that dust falls on him. Similarly you should not blow with your mouth or dust with a cloth but instead you should go further away and dust it.

48. On hearing news about someones grief, worry or sickness do not mention it to anyone unless you have made certain. His relatives especially should not be told, because if the information is wrong, it will unnecessarily worry other people.

49. Similarly do not inform distant relatives if there is a slight illness as this may cause unnecessary concern and anxiety.

50. Do not spit or put paan (betel-leaf) on the wall. Similarly do not merely wipe your hands on the wall or door. Wash them instead.

51. If there is need for more food on the table, do not take a utensil from in front of someone. Instead, take the food in another dish.

52. If someone is sitting on the bed or lying down, do not call him. If you pass by, walk in such a manner that you do not bump the bed. If you want to put something on that bed or take something, do so quietly.

53. Do not leave food uncovered. Even if you leave something on the table that is going to be eaten last, cover it also.

54. The visitor should leave a little food on the table if he is satisfied so that the host does not get the impression that the food was less and thereby feel ashamed.

55. Whichever utensil is completely empty and has to be put in the cupboard or unit should be placed upside down.

56. When walking, lift your foot completely and step forward. Do not drag your feet. Apart from wearing out the shoe, it also looks unmannerly.

57. Always be careful that a portion of the scarf or shawl does not hang on the ground.

58. If someone asks for salt or for some other food, bring it in a utensil, not in the hand.

59. Do not speak of shameless things in front of girls as this can make them lose their modesty.

FAULTS WOMEN SHOULD REFRAIN FROM

1. They do not give a logical answer which can satisfy the questioner. They add many unnecessary points and the actual answer is still not known. Always remember that if anyone asks a question, fully understand what is being said and then reply accordingly.

2. When women are given some work, they listen and keep quiet. This leaves the speaker in doubt because he does not know whether the answer is in the affirmative or in the negative. In this manner the task remains undone.

3. Women normally scream when giving the maid a task to perform or tell anyone something. There are two evils in this: One is shamelessness and lack of concealment (pardah) because the sound reaches outside. The second evil is that the message is not understood and the work remains undone.

4. Women generally waste money in useless avenues even if they have to take a loan. It is sinful to waste. Whenever you intend spending, first examine whether there is any deeni benefit or any worldly need. After thoroughly pondering, if there is a need and a benefit, go ahead and spend. As far as possible avoid taking debts even if you have to undergo a little hardship.

5. Always be punctual especially when travelling. Do not delay unnecessarily.

6. Do not take too many things on a journey. This restricts the space. The greatest problem is for the accompanying men who have to look after everything. In certain places they have to carry the things and certain places they have to pay the transport costs. Take similar precautions on a train-journey because the more provisions you take, the more problems will arise.

7. Upon reaching a place, women should not descend from the car immediately. First send a male to find out if there is anyone and inform them of your arrival. If there is

any male he will separate himself. When you are informed that there is no male in the house, you can enter.

8. When two women are conversing, it often happens that one begins to speak while the other has not as yet finished speaking. In fact it occurs very often that both start speaking together. Neither of them listen to the other. What benefit is there in speaking in such a manner?

9. Women keep jewellery or money carelessly under the pillow or open in some corner even though they have the means to protect it in a safe place.

10. Sometimes you send a woman for some work and she goes and begins something else. She returns after having completed both tasks. The person who sent her is confronted with extreme anxiety and doubt because he has estimated that the work will take a certain amount of time and when that time passes by, he begins to get worried. In the meanwhile the woman thinks to herself that there is no harm in doing both errands simultaneously. Do not do so. First complete the initial

task thereby honouring his request and thereafter tackle your other work at ease.

11. A common defect is of laziness and procrastination i.e. to leave work for later. Most often harm is caused.

12. There is no brevity in the nature of some women and a woman does not realise that the situation requires haste. Therefore the task has to be done as quickly as possible. Sometimes the actual work is spoilt and the opportunity lost.

13. If something is lost, women normally accuse without investigating. Do not become suspicious on the slightest of doubts.

14. Too much money is spent on purchasing betel leaf (paan) and tobacco. At least five or six poor people can be fed with that money. By eating paan unnecessarily, one becomes addicted.

15. If there are two people speaking about some matter, do not unnecessarily meddle. As long as you are not asked for your advice, remain silent.

16. After returning from a gathering do not describe the form, clothing and jewellery of other women to your husband. This may incline his heart to one of them ultimately resulting in anguish.

17. Do not interrupt someone who is engaged in some work. This is a loathsome habit. Wait until he finishes his task and then address him.

18. Always speak properly so that you are understood. Sometimes due to not understanding the message correctly, animosity is created between two people.

19. Listen with full attention when you are spoken to. Do not do something else or begin to speak to someone else.

20. Admit your faults and do not make feeble excuses.

21. Do not criticize any small or insignificant present which is given to you by saying, "what was the need to send such a present? Did the sender not have any shame in sending it?" This is an evil habit. The sender could only afford that much. Appreciate it and be grateful.

22. Do not hesitate in doing a task which is assigned to you.

23. Do not stitch clothes while you are wearing them.

24. At the time of arrival and departure, women attempt to cry even if they have to force themselves because they fear that if they do not shed a few tears people will say they are bereft of love.

25. Do not carelessly leave a needle in the pillow as it can prick someone.

26. Always protect the children from heat and cold as neglect in this regard results in illness.

27. Do not feed the children when they are not hungry nor insist on feeding the visitors.

EXPERIENCE AND ORGANISATION

1. As far as possible do not have both your sons' or both daughters' weddings at the same time because there will be a difference between the daughters-in-law and the sons-in-law, in the features of the boys and girls, in their neatness of clothing and in their modesty. There are many other factors in which there will be differences and people have the habit of extolling one and criticizing the other. This will unjustly hurt the feeling of the other.

2. Do not trust each and every person nor be in the habit of leaving the house in someones custody. Until you are not confident of a persons integrity, do not place your trust in him. In some areas many women enter the homes, some in the guise of hajees with a piece of the cloth of the Kaaba, some making taweez knots etc., some as fortune tellers and some with amusements. Do not let them enter the house. They have destroyed many a home.

3. Do not leave your safe or box which contains money, jewellery and valuables open and walk away. Either lock it or take it with you.

4. As far as possible do not purchase goods on credit. However if you are compelled to do so, make a note of the price and the date of purchase and pay as soon as possible.

5. Keep a record of the clothing given for washing. Do not rely on your memory.

6. As far as possible keep the house expenses to a minimum. In fact you should save from the amount you are given to use for the house.

7. Do not tell those women who habitually come to the house from elsewhere such things which you do not want

others to know of because they carry tales to many houses.

8. Do not cook rice and flour by estimate. Approximate your expenses and measure the ingredients for both meals. Do not pay heed if anyone teases you.

9. When your daughters go outside, do not make them wear jewellery. There is fear of both life and wealth.

10. If a man comes to the door and explains his relationship or friendship or any kind of contact with your husband, father or brother, do not allow him inside i.e. even after making pardah nor give him anything valuable. Send food etc. to him as if he is a stranger. Do not show too much affection and sincerity unless a male from the house recognizes him. Similarly do not use anything which he may give you. Do not be perturbed if he gets offended.

11. If an unknown woman comes and informs you that she was told to come and fetch you, do not accompany her. Do not do any work which a stranger may tell you to do, nor give him anything from the house.

12. Do not let such a tree grow in the house, the fruit of which can injure someone.

13. Wear warm clothing in winter. Most women do not wear sufficient clothing and this inevitably results in colds and flu.

14. Teach the children the parents' names and even the grandfather's name and ask them occasionally in order for them to remember. The benefit of this is that if the child gets lost and is asked about his parents, he can mention the name. In this way someone or the other can return the child to the parents. If the child does not know the name, he will say I am mummy's child or daddy's, making it difficult to trace the actual parents.

15. At a certain place a woman left her child and went away for some work. Meanwhile a cat came and scratched the child so viciously that he died. Two lessons can be learnt from this: Firstly, a child should not be left alone. Secondly, dogs and cats can never be trusted. Some women foolishly make the cats sleep with them. What guarantee do they have of the cat not striking a paw deceivingly at night, or biting or getting hold of the jugular vein.

16. Before using any medicine always show it to the doctor first. Clean it thoroughly before using. Sometimes an unqualified doctor may give you a wrong prescription. Whatever medicine remains over in a container or sachet should be labelled otherwise no one may recognize it. No matter how expensive it was, it will have to be discarded. You may remember wrongly and use it for some other illness, thus causing even more harm.

17. If you do happen to give a loan, do not give too much. Give an amount which, in the event of non-repayment will not overburden you.

18. When intending to undertake something new or major, first take the advice of an understanding, religious and obliging person.

19. Keep your money and valuables safely hidden. Do not mention it to everyone.

20. When writing a letter to someone write the address clearly. If you happen to write to the same person again, do not leave your address out assuming the addressee to have remembered it from your first letter. Allah knows best whether the first letter reached or not. If perchance it did not reach, how much inconvenience the addressee will experience especially if he does not know the address by memory or is illiterate.

21. When travelling by public transport eg. a train, safeguard your ticket very carefully. Do not be negligent and sleep in the train nor tell any fellow passenger your secret or mention anything about your valuables and

jewellery. Do not eat anything given to you by strangers eg. betel leaf, sweetmeats etc. Do not wear jewellery when travelling by train. Keep it safely in a box etc. You can wear it on reaching home.

22. Always keep some loose coins in your pocket.

23. Do not interfere with an insane person nor speak to him. If he is not in his senses, he may say or do something that is highly embarrassing to you.

24. Do not place your barefeet anywhere in the dark nor your hand. First switch the light on and then proceed.

25. Do not tell each and every person your secret. By mentioning it to others it is more likely to be exposed.

26. Keep the necessary medicines at home.

27. Always ponder at the consequence of any act before attempting it.

28. Do not purchase crockery and utensils unnecessarily as this destroys ones wealth.

29. If women are sitting in a train and their husbands are sitting in another coach, the women should not alight by observing or hearing the name of the station they intend going to. Some cities have 2 or 3 stations. There is a possibility that the men may alight at another station resulting in both parties separating and causing unnecessary inconvenience. The women should disembark only when the men come to fetch them.

30. Women should also keep the following items with them: a book of masalahs (laws), a pen, paper and a jug for wudu.

31. Do not ask people going on a journey to bring anything for you nor request them to take anything. These

requests most often cause inconvenience. If you intend to send a parcel or a letter, it can be posted.

32. Do not partake of anything given to you by a stranger on a journey. Sometimes criminals give poison or intoxicants with the intention of looting your belongings.

33. Whilst hurrying to catch the train, be careful not to sit in a class higher than the one you paid for.

34. Whilst sewing, if a needle gets stuck in the cloth, do not remove it with your mouth. Sometimes it may break or slip and pierce the palate or tongue.

35. Always keep a nailclipper with you.

36. Do not ever put medicine in the eyes.

37. Do not interfere in other peoples affairs nor give any advice. However if you are requested to do so, there is no harm.

38. Do not insist on someone staying over. This can inconvenience a person. What benefit is there in such love, the result of which is animosity?

39. Do not carry something that is too heavy. Women should especially be careful because their joints and blood vessels are much more delicate and sensitive.

40. Do not leave a needle or any sharp object lying around. It can cause an injury.

41. Do not punish a child or student with a thick stick nor kick him.

42. Do not give something heavy or dangerous from above someone. Even food and water should not be given from above someone.

43. Always inform the host if you have already eaten. This will not inconvenience him by unnecessarily preparing food.

44. Do not buy and sell at an inconvenient place.

45. Children of a learning age should be given food which strengthens the brain.

46. As far as possible do not remain alone at home during the night. Allah only knows what calamity can befall a person.

47. Do not allow children to do any risky or dangerous tasks.

48. Do not suddenly pick up bricks, stones etc. that are lying in one place for a long time. Very often scorpions or other harmful creatures breed under them. Always lift them up carefully.

49. When intending to lie on the bed, first dust it as there may be some creature lying on it.

50. Place leaves of the margosa tree or camphor or naphthelene balls between silk and woollen clothing to prevent moths or worms from breeding.

51. When concealing money at home, always tell one or two persons whom you trust.

52. Some people use a lock and place the key somewhere nearby. This is inefficient.

53. Do not light a lamp of oil as it is very harmful. Be careful when switching a lantern off. Do not place your hand on it. Use a fan or cloth to extinguish it.

54. If you want to count money at night, do so silently.

55. Do not leave a burning lamp in an empty house. Similarly do not throw away a burning match. Either extinguish it and then throw it away or trample it with your shoe so that no spark remains.

56. Do not allow children to play with matches, fire and fireworks.

57. When going to toilet with a lamp, place it carefully so that it does not burn the clothing. Many people have sustained burns in this manner. Kerosene oil especially, is very dangerous.

CARING FOR THE CHILDREN

1. Wash the child's hands, face, neck, ears, and groin properly with a wet cloth each day . When dirt collects, the flesh becomes putrefied and sores develop as a result.

2. When the child urinates or passes stool, cleanse him immediately. Do not merely wipe with a cloth as this results in a rash and a swelling on the body. During cold weather use warm water.

3. Make him sleep separately and join the sides of the bed or place two pillows on the either side so that he does not fall. If you let him sleep next to you, there is the fear of him getting crushed under you unknowingly. His limbs are very tender and great precaution must be taken.

4. Do not let him form a habit of playing on the swing as swings are not availabe everyhere. Also do not keep him in the lap for too long as this makes him weak.

5. Form the childs habit of going to everyone. By going to one person only, the child will be unduly grieved if that person passes away.

6. If you want a wet-nurse to breastfeed your child, choose one whose milk is good and who is young, with a good character. She must be religious; not foolish, shameless, ill-mannered, miserly and greedy.

7. When the child begins to eat, do not let the wet-nurse feed him. Feed him yourself or let a responsible person feed him so that he does not overeat and become sick. When administering medicine, have it prepared and given in your presence.

8. When he begins to understand a little, let him form a habit of eating with his own hand. Teach him to eat with the right hand and to eat less so that he be free of illnesses and greed.

9. The parents or guardian should take care that the child is always clean. If the hands and face get dirty, they should be washed immediately.

10. If possible, there should be someone to keep an eye on the child while he is playing and protect him from injury and evil company.

11. The servant should be emphatically told not to feed him in any place. If someone gives him something to eat, he should bring it home and show it to the parents.

12. The child should be taught not to ask anyone for anything besides the buzrugs (saints) nor take anything from anyone or take anything without permission.

13. Do not show too much affection for the child thereby spoiling him.

14. Do not make him wear very tight clothing.

15. Inculcate in him the habit of using miswaak regularly.

16. The first part of this book contains etiquettes for eating, drinking, speaking, meeting people, sitting and awakening. Teach the child these etiquettes. Do not feel that he will learn them himself when he grows up or you will teach him at that time. Remember that no one can learn himself and by reading he will become aware of it but a habit will not be formed. As long as he does not have these habits, no matter how educated he may be, he will always be ill-mannered and shameless.

17. Do not pressurize the child to learn. Initially appoint one hour for his learning, then two, three and so on. Make him strive according to his capacity. Do not teach the whole day as this causes excessive fatigue. If there is too much strain, his heart and mind will deteriorate, his memory will weaken and he will become lazy like a sick person. He will ultimately lose interest in studying.

18. Besides a few minor vacations he should not be given too many holidays without necessity as this will bore him.

19. Engage the service of the most perfect and knowledgeable person available in the field he has chosen. Employing cheap teachers will have detrimental results.

20. Arrange the learning program in such a way that the easy lessons are taught in the afternoon and the difficult ones in the morning because a person becomes tired later in the day and fears difficult lessons.

21. Children, especially girls should be taught cooking and sewing.

22. Teach the boys not to make istinja (purifying oneself after answering the call of nature) in front of others, especially females.

GOOD ADVICE

1. It is wrong to tease someone about a past incident. Women have this evil habit of mentioning past incidents of grief and sorrow which have already been forgiven and forgotten. This renews the enmity.

2. Do not complain about the in-laws at home. Some complaints are sinful, show lack of patience and most often increase the enmity on both sides. In the same manner do not praise your family and exalt them in front of your in-laws. This can lead to the sin of pride and arrogance. The in-laws will be perturbed at the behaviour of the daughter-in-law.

3. Do not speak too much as this can result in something unsuitable being uttered.

4. As far as possible do not give your work to others. Do it yourself. In fact do the work of others as well. Not only will you be rewarded but you will be liked by everyone.

5. Neither pay attention nor listen to those women who gossip. Besides this act being sinful these women cause dissension.

6. If you hear any complaint about your mother-in-law, sister- in-law, the wife of your husband's brother or any near or far relative, do not conceal it in your heart. It is better to regard it as a lie and discard it. If you do not have that much courage, face the person who mentioned the complaint to you and clarify the matter so that no corruption spreads.

7. Do not be harsh on the servants. Ensure that your children do not harrass the maid's children because they, out of respect will not say anything verbally but will be hurt within.

8. Appoint a time to teach girls the Quran and books of deen. If books are not easily available, teach them the complete Behishti Zewar (Heavenly Ornaments by Ml. Ashraf Ali Thanwi). Also ensure that they learn some art or craft. However other subjects and arts must only be taught after they have learnt the Quran.

9. Do not make the girls that come to learn by you do any of your housework. Treat them like your own children.

10. Do not take any burden upon yourself for the sake of fame.

11. Be simple and humble in your ways. Wear simple clothing. Do not try and adorn yourself excessively when intending to go out.

12. Do not mention the flaws of a person's family or those of a deceased person. Not only is it sinful, it also causes undue grief.

13. Return someone else's utensil as soon as possibe. Do not mix it with your own utensils but keep it separate, so that it does not get mislaid. It is sinful to use anyone's property without his permission.

14. Do not form a habit of eating lavishly. You may not be able to afford sumptuous meals all the time.

15. Do not forget a person's favour no matter how insignificant and do not boast of your favour no matter how great.

16. The best way to spend your free time is to read a book. Do not read books which have an evil influence.

17. Never raise your voice when speaking. It is shameless for women to let their voices be heard outside.

18. If you wake up at night, do not disturb anyone by making a din. Maintain silence in whatever you are doing.

19. It is disrespectful to laugh at the elders. Do not be too free with young children otherwise they will become disrespectful.

20. If everyone stands up in a gathering, you should not remain seated as this is a sign of pride.

21. Do not praise your family or children in front of anyone.

22. If there is remorse between two people, do not say anything inflammatory to either of them.

23. Do not be harsh.

24. Do not express anger over anyone in front of a guest. The guest will not be at ease as he was before.

25. Be courteous to an enemy as well. His enmity will not increase.

26. Do not let crumbs of bread lie around. Whenever you see some crumbs, clean them and eat them. If you cannot eat them, give them to some animal. If the tablecloth has fragments, do not dust it off where someone walks.

27. After completing a meal do not leave the food and stand up as this is disrespectful. First clear the tablecloth and then get up.

28. Girls should not play habitually with boys because the habits of both become spoilt. If any unknown boy enters the house, the girls should move away from there.

29. Do not scuffle mockingly. Most often it causes frustration and sometimes it can cause an injury. Also do not frequently joke in such a manner that it angers another person.

30. Do not sit at the head-side of an elderly person that is lying down unless you are asked to do so.

31. When you borrow something from someone, safeguard it carefully and return it as soon as you have finished using it. Do not let the person ask you for it. How will he know that you are no longer using it? Secondly, he may not ask you out of consideration. Similarly if you are owing money to someone, pay him as soon as you can.

32. If you have to walk at night, remove the anklets from your legs. Do not let them tinkle whilst walking.

33. If there is only one person in a room and the door is closed, do not suddenly open the door and enter. He may be in the nude or he may be sleeping and will be disturbed. First call out softly and ask permission to enter. Enter only after obtaining permission, otherwise remain silent and leave. If it is something very urgent, call out aloud to wake him up.

34. Do not criticise a nation or town in the presence of someone you do not know. It will be highly embarrassing if he happens to hail from that town or nation.

35. Similarly if you do not know who has done a certain act, do not say "which idiot has done this" or something similar. It will be highly embarrassing if it is someone you know.

36. If your child denies doing any wrong, do not take the side of your child especially in front of him as this will spoil his habit.

37. When marrying your daughters, ensure the piety and religiousness of the boy. A boy with a good religious background will care for his wife properly. However if a person is very wealthy but he is irreligious, he will not know the rights of the wife and will not be loyal to her.

38. Some women have the habit of throwing a pebble towards a person from behind the curtain in order to

attract his attention. The pebble can injure someone. Use other means to attract a persons attention without injuring anyone.

39. Mark your clothing with a floral label etc. to prevent the clothing from getting mixed at the cleaners. It is not permissible to take someone else's clothing.

40. There is a custom amongst the Arabs that if a person wants something as a blessing from a pious saint, he will give the saint something and tell him to use it for a few days. In this way the buzurg (saint) does not have any hesitation, otherwise if 20 people ask the saint for something, he will not even have a cloth left for himself. It is a very suitable custom to adopt.

41. If someone makes a statement and you want to contradict it, do not attribute it to someone else who upon hearing what you said will resent it.

42. Do not accuse anyone on mere suspicion without investigating. It can be very distressing.

EARNING WITH YOUR OWN HANDS

Poor women who do not have any financial support to purchase their food and clothing should either marry, or earn a living themselves. But the ignoramuses regard both nikah and trade as defects. No one gets the taufeeq (divine help) of spending on these poor people, then how can they survive?

O women! Allah has granted you choice over your heart, hands and feet. Do not pay attention to what others have to say. If anyone is of marriageable age, she should get married and if she is not of marriageable age, or does not desire to do so although she does not regard it as defective, or she is fearful of a dispute, she should earn by some lawful means. Do not pay heed to someone who criticises your practice. It is not erroneous to learn a trade or art.

O women! Had it been disrespectful, why did Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam do it? Who has more respect than him?

It is reported in the hadeeth that Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam used to shepherd goats and said that there was no Prophet who did not tend a flock of sheep. He also said that the best earning is with ones own hands. Hadhrat Dawood Alaihis Salaam used to earn a living by plying his own trade.

"O Allah, grant us coolness of the eyes from our wives and children, and make us leaders of the pious"

SOME EXEMPLARY INCIDENTS

Sisters, the etiquettes of how to lead a pious life mentioned in the previous pages is not merely hypothetical, but in fact some Muslim women have practised upon these etiquettes and presented an example for us. The world remembers these women till today and they will be remembered till the day of Qiyamat. A few incidents will be narrated to serve as an example.

FATHIMA -AZ-ZAHRA RADHIALLAHU ANHA

Rasulullah's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) daughter was drowned in the fear of Allah. She used to sob bitterly in salaat, yet she did not falter in serving her husband. Today many women boast of their worship while trampling all the rights of the husband. Thereafter they have hope in their worship leading them to salvation. This is erroneous. This incident clearly explains why.

One day Hadhrat Fathima was ill. In this condition she performed ablution and stood up for salaat. Hazrat Ali Radhiallahu Anhu also woke up and went for salaat. When he returned after completing his salaat, he found Fathima Radhiallahu Anha grinding flour with the hand-mill. Hadhrat Ali Radhiallahu Anhu said: "O daughter of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), rest for a while. Do not let your illness deteriorate."

Fathima Radhiallahu Anha smiled and said: "Both these duties are not so difficult so as to aggravate any illness. To worship Allah and to serve the husband are the best cures for any sickness. If one of them become the cause of death, what better death can there be?"

Together with the worship of Allah, how much importance did Fathima Radhiallahu Anha attach to serving her husband. Also note that Rasulullah's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) daughter was merrily grinding flour and regarded it as her good fortune.

THE SECOND DAUGHTER OF RASULULLAH SALLALLAHU ALAIHI WASALLAM

Some women lose hope looking at the oppression of their husbands. They should tread the path of piety and have hope in Allah's mercy that one day this oppression will cease and they will be in comfort. Allah most certainly rewards one for being patient. An incident of this nature is that of one of Rasulullah's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) daughters.

A daughter of Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam was married to Abu Lahab's son. When the chapter of Abu Lahab was revealed in the Quran, Abu Lahab became very angry because his destruction was mentioned therein. He instigated his son to divorce Rasulullah's Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam daughter. He (the son) first went to Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam and hurled abuse at him and thereafter divorced his daughter. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam and his daughter were greatly

perturbed. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam was so disturbed that he cursed Abu Lahab's son saying : "May Allah destroy him by means of a dog". When does the cry of an oppressed go in vain? Abu Lahab's son was destroyed in a most dreadful manner.

There were many people travelling on a journey. At nightfall they camped at a place. Abu Lahab's son slept on a high boulder in fear of Rasulullah's Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam curse. At night while he was sleeping, a dog came and sniffed at all those who were sleeping. Then it sniffed at Abu Lahab's son and tore him to pieces. Rasullulah's (Salallahu Alaihi Wasallam) daughter was rescued from this oppression and was then married to Hadhrat Usman Ghani Radhiallahu Anhu.

There is some solace for oppressed women in this incident and a great lesson for oppressive husbands. Oppression and transgression should be refrained from as they are disliked by Allah.

THE DAUGHTER OF SAEED

Hadhrat Saeed bin Musayyab had a beautiful daughter who was a hafizah and aalimah. The caliph of that time desired her for his son, but Saeed refused because the prince was not pious. In his (Saeed's) sight wealth had no reality. Upon this refusal, Saeed was severely punished by the caliph but he did not accept the proposal.

Saeed had a student who was extremely poor. He used to come regularly to Saeed's gathering. Once he remained absent for a few days after which he came. Saeed asked him the reason for his absence. He said that his wife had passed away and had to remain absent as a result. Saeed consoled him. When he began to depart Saeed asked him if he desired another wife. The student said: "Hadhrat, who will give their daughter to a pauper like me." He uttered these words with extreme remorse. Saeed consoled him and promised to get him married immediately. He (Saeed) brought his daughter and the nikah was performed. In the evening he took his daughter to the student's house where they could meet.

It is significant to note that the girl was so pious that after rejecting the king's proposal she did not object to marrying a poor person. She was happy and served her husband peerlessly. If the parents of today can demonstrate simplicity and piety like Saeed, these innocent girls will find good homes. The reason for them not getting married is because they cannot find a wealthy home. In this way many a girl is wasting her valuable youth.

THE DAUGHTER OF SHUJA KIRMANI

Hazrat Shuja Kirmani was a great saint of his time and was related to the royal family. The king of Kirman requested Hazrat Shuja to marry his daughter to the prince. Upon his request Shuja asked for 3 days respite during which he remained in the mosque. On the final day he saw a mendicant performing salaat. When he completed his namaaz, Shuja requested him to marry his daughter. The saintly mendicant replied that he was a

pauper and that he could not get married. He only had 3 dirhams (silver coins). Notwithstanding this meagre amount, Shuja accepted him as his son-in-law. What happened thereafter is worth noting.

When the girl went to her husband she saw a piece of dry bread lying in a bowl. She asked him about it. The husband replied that it was yesterday's left over bread which he had kept for tonight. The bride was shocked to hear this and asked permission to return to her father's house. The husband said that he knew a girl from the royal family could not live with him. However the bride replied that she was not returning because of his poverty, but due to the weakness of his Iman (faith) because he kept yesterday's bread for today. She said: "I am totally surprised at my father who, for twenty years did not get me married because he was in search of a pious and religious person and when he did get me married, then it was to someone like you who does not have trust in Allah as the Provider and makes arrangements for tomorrow from today".

The mendicant was surprised to hear this, and asked: "How can this error be forgiven". The bride said : "Either keep the piece of bread or keep me". The mendicant immediately gave the bread away as charity.

THE INCIDENT OF A WOMAN

In conclusion, an incident relating the consequences of an evil woman will be narrated. When girls get together they normally gossip, backbite, carry tales, express jealousy and sometimes even slander. They make mountains out of a mole-hill and begin doubting the slightest movements of their husbands and sometimes even accuse them. This is highly dangerous. Allah greatly dislikes the innocent being accused.

There was a woman in the time of Imam Malik (Rahmatullah Alaih) who used to give ghusl (bath) to deceased women. She bathed the body of a woman and while washing her private parts she thought to herself that

this private part has committed adultery i.e. she accused her. Allah was greatly displeased. For others to learn a lesson, the woman's hand immediately adhered to the private part of the deceased woman. After great attempts it was still not freed. People tried all methods but eventually gave up hope and went to Imam Malik (Rahmatullahi Alaihi) who was the most learned person of that time. They narrated the incident to him. He said that the woman who was giving a bath must be lashed because she has slandered the deceased. Consequently when this was done, her hand was released. All men and women shuddered upon hearing this.

Sisters, do not think that accusing someone is different from accusing your husband jokingly. Nonetheless a false accusation is a major sin and the punishment for it is severe. Due to this doubt and accusation, mistrust is created. A minor incident can have such severe repercussions that many a marriage can be destroyed. If there is any doubt, great wisdom and tact must be used to rectify the situation.

May Allah make all women lead their lives according to His will. (Ameen)

THE END